DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 315 400 SP 031 894

AUTHOR Bell, David
TITLE Reversing the Trend: The Lack of Minority Teachers.
PUB DATE Nov 89
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association (18th, Little Rock, AR, November 7-10, 1989).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Choice; *Declining Enrollment; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; *Minority Group Teachers; Scholarships; State Action; *Student Recruitment; *Teacher Shortage; Teacher Supply and Demand; Teaching Conditions

ABSTRACT

Few educational issues have caused as much concern as those relating to teacher supply and demand especially as it relates to the recruitment of black teachers. Suggestions are made for reversing the trend of declining minority involvement in teaching, focusing on the role of the state and state universities. It is emphasized that minority student recruitment into teaching should start long before graduation from high school. It is noted that the real solution may not be reallocation of able minority students but redevelopment of strategies to increase the potential pool of students who complete college. A 46-item bibliography is attached. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED315400

Reversing the Trend: The Lack of Minority Teachers

Paper presented by

David Bell
Arkansas Tech University
Russellville, Arkansas 72801

Mid-South Educational Research Association
Little Rock, Arkansas

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D Bell

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

November 7-10, 1989

SP031894

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Reversing the Trend: The Lack of Minority Teachers

INTRODUCTION

Todays educational reports emphasize the central role of teachers and indicate an impending nationwide shortage of teachers during the coming decade. In a major study of America's public schools sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation, the foundation President and former U.S. Commissioner of Education, Earnest Boyer states that the climate they found among teachers was affected very severely by a feeling of powerlessness, growth of decision making beyond the school, and accountability beyond the classroom. To talk about recruiting better students into teaching without examining the circumstances that discourage teachers is simply a diversion... Teachers are troubled not only about salaries but about loss of status, bureaucratic pressure, a negative public image, and lack of recognition and rewards (Feistritzer, 1983).

Teacher moral and the attitudes toward teaching are alarming. Twenty years ago, about 60% of teachers said if they were just starting out, they would definitely go into teaching again. Today, only 21% of public school teachers definitely would enter the profession again. Ten years ago 75% of parents surveyed said they would be pleased to have a child become a public school teacher. Today the figure is under 50 percent. All the data about who currently is going into teaching are gloomy. Not only are fewer persons choosing teaching as a career, but the academic caliber of those who are is decreasing. The reasons are not hard to understand; low pay, poor working conditions, little opportunity for upward mobility within the profession, and lack of status in the society. Less than 5 % of full-time college freshmen chose elementary or secondary school teaching as a probable career in 1982, compared to 19% in 1970 (U.S. Department of Education, 1983).

Data from the National Center for Educational Statistics' National Longitudinal Study of 1972 and its High School and Beyond study in 1980 showed that 12% of the college bound seniors said they intended to major in education in college in 1972. In 1980 only 7 percent chose education as an intended major. Women comprised 75 percent of those intending to major in education in both years. However, the number of female seniors who were college bound and who declared education as an intended major dropped from 19% in 1972 to 10% in 1980 (U.S. Department of Education, 1983). These data are further substantiated by the fact that fewer than 5% of the high school seniors who took the SAT in 1982 said they intended to major in education at college. This percentage is down 50% since 1973 (College Entrance Examination Board, 1982).

Few educational issues have caused as much concern as those relating to teacher supply and demand especially as it relates to minority recruitment. The size of the black college population has shrunk by 15% since 1976 and the proportion of minority teachers in the United States is predicted to drop from twelve to five percent by 1990. The Office on Civil Rights reported that 20,254 education degrees in 1975-76 were awarded at the bachelors level with this dropping to 11,490 in 1982-83. Twice as many minority education majors fail current required standardized teaching tests as white students, and the number of education graduates from historically black colleges, still the

source of two out of three black teachers in the country, has plummeted.

The shift is away from education and social sciences into more technical fields. Indications are that education loses out to other higher status, higher-paying career choices among those who have the greatest choices. Recent degree recipients certified to teach but not teaching are much greater than the number teaching with or without certification or the number of newly qualified to teach. Data from the Center for Education Statistics for 1985 reports that 18% of minority candidates who were newly qualified to teach did not apply for a teaching job. In a recent survey of 14,600 certified black teachers only 8,500 were teaching. Furthermore, about 25% of newly prepared teachers select fields other than teaching.

It is predicted that in the south 1/3 or more of veteran black teachers have 25 or more years experience and are rapidly approaching retirement. National data indicate that blacks are the only minority group that has lost ground in higher education in the past decade. If these trends continue minority representation in the national teaching force could be reduced to less than 5% by the year 2000. The following article discusses ideas that could be used at the national, state and local level to begin to reverse this trend.

NATIONAL MINORITY RECRUITMENT IDEAS

Nationally we must remain mindful that there is a diminishing presence of students, especially minority students, who are interested in teaching and we must insure that steps are taken immediately to reverse that trend. Those of us in higher education must understand and assist others in understanding the basic issues relating to student recruitment. Some suggestions in use across the country for improved minority recruitment include:

1. Tap two year colleges.

2. Provide job and scholarship assurance programs for middle school students.

3. Bringing high school students into a tutorial situation.

4. Providing programs to welcome prospective members to the teaching fraternity at an earlier stage.

5. Encourage students to switch or complete enough hours for certification.

6. Run television spots featuring teaching as rewarding.

7. Remind students that teaching can lead to management.

8. Provide a statewide support program.

9. Implement a teacher cadre at the middle school level.

10. Implement a high school teacher/mentor program.

11. Teach a college university freshman and sophomore career seminar program.

12. Provide forgivable loans.

STATE MINORITY RECRUITMENT PLAN (Specifically Arkansas)

States need to develop a variety of approaches that will begin to address this problem. One of the ways to reduce the shortage of teachers in critical areas is to offer alternative routes to certification. Arkansas, as well as many other states, has devised and implemented a plan for tapping a pool of people who hold Bachelor's degrees and who appear to have an interest in the teaching profession. In Arkansas alone, in 1987-88 there were documented shortages that indicated that more than 80% of school districts in Arkansas have certification deficiencies. Particularly acute areas include physics, journalism, advanced math, and chemistry. Because of a declining enrollment of participants in teacher education programs and an aging teacher population throughout the nation, the teacher shortage is expected to continue. In Arkansas we are mindful that there is a diminishing presence of minorities in higher education and feel that steps should be taken immediately to reverse that trend. Implications for this loss of talent are dramatic. Arkansas could be faced with a virtual absence of black teachers, professors, and educational administrators within a decade. To that end the governor appointed a task force chaired by Dr. Charles Dunn, president of Henderson State University, that in September 1, 1988 made the following recommendations:

1. Create a senior level position in state department of education with the primary function of recruitment and retention of minority educators.

2. Develop a program to make the public aware of the seriousness of the problem.

3. Districts would implement a home instruction program to increase home and family involvement.

4. State should require kindergarten attendance and support it.

5. Establish grant of $2000 per year to 150 new black students per year entering Arkansas institutions of higher education and who plan to pursue teacher education programs. These may be renewed for a second year. Eligibility- black, first time freshmen in teacher education, academic potential based on standardized tests and high school grades, and completion of selected courses in high school.

6. Establish scholarship grants of $3000 per year to 100 new black students . May be renewed for a second year.

7. Fund summer enrichment programs at colleges and universities such as YOU and Upward Bound for intermediate and junior highs school students.

8. Gather data on success/failure of blacks in teacher preparation programs and report to governor and board of higher education.

9. Provide funding for counseling of minority students and development of a comprehensive support system for minority students while in college.

10. Provide financial assistance to enter and remain in teaching.

11. Develop an incentive program in matching funds for salaries to public school and colleges and universities which increase the employment of minority faculty

12. Expand available matching funds for minority faculty to obtain the doctorate.

13. Raise salaries to regional averages.

14. Create minority chairs in Colleges of Education.

15. Hire para-professionals to relieve teachers of all non-professional duties

16. Sponsor summer teaching institutes.

17. Establish a professional practice commission for the teaching profession.

18. Provide low interest loans to minority teachers willing to teach in economically deprived areas.

19. Arrange exchange programs between systems with large minority teacher populations (Detroit, Atlanta, Chicago) and Arkansas schools to provide black role models for Arkansas students and to encourage teacher recruitment from those systems.

20. Make use of churches and civic organizations to recruit.

MINORITY RECRUITMENT PLAN FOR A STATE UNIVERSITY

The interest in a recruitment plan at the state level should then lead to plans at the university level to further refine these state level suggestions. Each university that educates teachers should develop a university plan to increase the number of minority students that elect teaching as a career choice. Another facet of the recruitment problem is the need to increase the number of minorities in the applicant pool. The following could serve as a foundation for a state-wide teacher recruitment plan:

1. Provide scholarships for incoming freshman who declare majors in education and who meet specified standards as well as offer scholarships to upper level majors.

2. Target specific schools and recruit actively in those schools.

3. Provide intensive on-campus visits with innovative experiences for prospective recruits. Provide opportunities for high school students to visit the campus for brief periods in order to learn about university life through first-hand experiences. During the visits, students might spend time in classes, talk to current students in the program, find out about financial aid and application procedures, and participate in campus social activities.

4. Identify key persons in communities to assist with recruiting. Make use of university graduates to assist in this effort.

5. Invite representatives of targeted groups on campus for special appreciation and orientation sessions.

6. Invite high school counselors to recommend students with potential for teaching. (Counselors often recommend other career choices for the brightest students and discourage them from teaching as a career choice).

7. Actively recruit students from community colleges. Increase cooperation between university and community college personnel.

8. Work to ensure that education students presently enrolled in teacher education programs are successful and satisfied. Additional activities in this area might include:
   a. provide for positive press releases in hometown newspapers.
   b. provide for regular articles to appear in campus newspapers about education majors.
   c. create a student advisory council.
   d. encourage a student "replacement" campaign. The purpose of this campaign is to encourage each education major to recruit another student to take his/her place in the program by the time the student graduates.

9. Provide opportunities for education faculty to become visible in meaningful university related endeavors in the communities in which the university serves. Visible and respected faculty members attract students.

10. Develop and implement pre-collegiate programs in the schools in our service area. Let academically talented youngsters register as guest students while in high school with the understanding that courses taken will count for degree credit upon their admission. Initiate informational programs about the teacher education program in communities, schools, etc.

11. Establish a toll free line to call about the school of education.

12. Develop a network with elementary and secondary teaching associations which includes direct contact with youngsters in middle school and is maintained as they progress through high school.

13. Host "College for Kids" programs during the summer or designated weekends.

14. Develop feeder schools in an effort to create a tradition of students from the feeder school attending the university and enrolling in teacher education program.

15. Work to ensure that minority students presently enrolled in teacher education on campus are successful and satisfied because of their needs. Additional things that might be done for minority students:
   a. provide for positive press releases of minority majors in hometown

newspapers.

b. provide for regular articles to appear in campus paper about minority education majors.
c. create a minority student advisory council.
d. encourage a student "replacement" campaign. The purpose of this campaign is to encourage each minority education major to recruit another student to take his/her place in the program by the time the student graduates.

Many students have certain aspirations when they come to college. They want to become business majors, doctors, lawyers, etc. As they start on their career choices they may find that it is not quite what they imagined and desire to change majors. Teacher education should not be the major from which students go but rather the program should attract and retain good students. One of the ways that teacher education programs might keep their majors is through modeling of excellent teaching. If the courses in education are known as the best on campus thus refuting the old rinky-dink attitude of the past, this will encourage students to continue in education and for others to select it as a major Colleges or schools of education need to put forth a very positive image for their students. We could then attract many of these individuals who are looking to change or redirect their educational career choice.

Another avenue is to encourage certification in their majors. Students can be encouraged to become certified as well as "majoring' in their academic areas. Students majoring in one teaching area can be encouraged to do dual certification, thus making them more employable. Having a variety of teaching competencies may also make their retention as a teacher longer (Bullock, 1985; Ferrara, 1983; and Bell and Steinmiller, 1986).

CONCLUSIONS

The real solution may not be reallocation of able minority students but redevelopment of strategies to increase the potential pool of students who complete college because to recruit enough minorities to achieve parity would require that 60% of all minority college graduates enter teaching. Colleges to be successful must begin to seek students several years before will be ready to consider teaching careers. Some individual believe this shortage of black teachers is not a failure of higher education, but unfortunately is the result of the twelve year educational system which fails to instill in disadvantaged children the belief that they can succeed. There is a need to develop a program in kindergarten to foster self-worth and a sense of whether they are going to make it or not. Dr. Hornbeck, Maryland State Superintendent of Schools, also sees 3 and 4 years olds from poor families as a key to the long-term expansion of the minority teacher pool.

We must begin to match our liberal arts and science programs with what students will be tested on and modifications of the curriculum such as five year programs must be studied carefully. They greatly increase the cost of entering education while most existing salary structures do not adequately compensate for this extra year of training. State competency tests of basic skills must be examined as they communicate to students that only prospective teachers, as opposed to those planning to enter other professions, require

testing for mundane skills. State certification requirements that make no difference whatsoever in the quality of teaching while increasing bureaucratic costs of the educational enterprise must be removed.

The root of the problem is the public perception that teachers don't do anything very sophisticated. This is reinforced by the working conditions we impose on teachers. How many true professionals have hall duty or lunch room duty this week? The problems of attracting larger numbers of minorities to the teaching profession are part and parcel of the larger problems such as the reward structures and negative attitudes toward the profession.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alumni Association of the University of Michigan. (1987). Racism on campus. Michigan Alumnus 93 (5), pp 13-33.

The American Teacher, (1987), Survey conducted for Metropolitan Life Insurance Company New York: Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.

Bell, David and Steinmiller, Georgine (1986). A Timely Option for Rural Education: Dual Certification for Special/Elementary Education, ERIC, ED 277-529.

Bell, M.L., and Morsink, C.V. (1986). Quality and equity in the preparation of Black teachers. Journal of Teacher Education, 37 (2), 10-15.

Black Issues in Education, (1987), 4:15, Special Report: Engineering Education. Fairfx, VA: Cox, Mathews and Associates, Inc. December 15.

Bullock, L. (1985). On the Cutting Edge of Special Education. Todays Education Annual Edition, pp. 70-71.

College Entrance Examination Board (1982). National College-Bound Seniors, pp. 9-10.

Collison, M. N-K (1987a). Colleges try new techniques in fierce competition for black students. Chronicle of Higher Education, June 10, pp 1, 31-32.

Cooper, C.C. (1986). Strategies to assure certification and retention of Black teachers. Journal of Negro Education, 55 (1), 46-55.

Davis, M. (Ed.) et al. (1984). Prospective Black teachers and the closing door: Strategies for entry. Alabama Center for Higher Education. Birmingham, AL.

Dupre, B.B. (1986). Problems regarding the survival of future Black teachers in education. Journal of Negro Education, 55 (1), 56-66.

Earley, Penelope M., State and Federal Report. Recruiting Minorities into Teaching Careers. (1987), Teacher Education Quarterly 14 (4), pp 107-109.

Edelson, Edward. People Curricula, Equipment ..., Mosaic 18:1, Spring (1987). Washington, D.C.: National Science Foundation.

Edwards, Flora Mancuso; Mann, William, Minorities in Urban Community Colleges: Tomorrow's Students Today. (1988), p 34. ED291426.

Evangelauf, J., (1988). Plan to encourage minority students to pursue teaching careers is proposed. Chronicle of Higher Education, January 13, p 2.

Feistritzer, C. Emily (1983). The condition of Teaching. A State by State Analysis. A Carnegie Foundation Technical Report.

Feistritzer Publications. (1987). AACTE unveils minority teacher recruitment strategy. Teacher Education Reports, 9 (24), pp 1-4.

Ferrara, J.M., Hirshoren, A. Levin, G. (1983). Special Education in Rural Schools: The South Dakota Model. The Small School Forum, 4, (2), pp. 3-6.

Fox, J.A. (1986). Teacher certification requirements in the states: What they are versus what they should be. Panel presentation made at the National Invitational Conference on Preparation and Survival of Black Public School Teachers. Norfolk, VA.

Garcia, Jesus. Ethnic Minorities Underrepresented in NCSS, Social Studies Professional; (1988), 90 p 10.

Graham, Patricia Albjerg. Black Teachers: A Drastically Scarce Resource. (1987) Phi Delta Kappan; 68, pp 598-605.

Haberman, Martin. Proposal for Recruiting Minority Teachers: Promising Practices and Attractive Detours. (1988). ED29760.

Hackley, L.V. (1985). The decline in the number of Black teachers can be reversed. Educational Measurements: Issues and Practice, 4 (3), 17-19.

Heller, S. (1988). Some colleges find aggressive affirmative action efforts are starting to pay off, despite scarcity of candidates. Chronicle of Higher Education, February 10, pp 12, 16-17.

Henniger, M.L. (1987). Recruiting students at the high school level: The Education Week Experience. Action in Teacher Education, 8 (4), pp 15-17.

Hodgkinson, H.L. (1985). All one system - Demographics of education, kindergarten through graduate school, Washington, D.C.: Institute for Educational Leadership.

Jaschik, Scott. (1987), College Outlook Grim for Blacks 25 Years After Barriers Fall, The Chronicle of Higher Education, September 2.

Johnson, S.O. (1986). Black teachers: Finding them, getting them, keeping them. Paper presented at the National Invitational Conference on Preparation and Survival of Black Public School Teachers. Norfolk, VA.

Kauffman, Dagmar. (1987), Consensus Reached on Policy About Minorities in Teaching, BRIEFS 8:7. Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education., September.

Kortokrax-Clark, D. (1987). The minority teacher shortage: An overview and a solution. Action in Teacher Education, 8 (4), pp 7-13.

Luetke-Stahlman, B. (1983). Recruiting Black Teacher-Trainees into Programs for the Hearing Impaired. American Annals of the Deaf; 128 (6), pp 851-853. (EJ293289).

The Letter: (1987): 37 Presidents Write. AAHE Bulletin; pp 10-14. November. (ED289410).

McCurdy, Jack. (1987), Teacher Education Reforms Move Ahead, but Movement Faces Skeptics and Problems. Chronicle of Higher Education; 33 (37), p 23, May.

Myers, Henry A.; and Others. (1984). Critical Research Issues in Post-secondary Education in the 1980's. ED242252.

National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). A nation at risk. Washington, D.C.

Reed, D.F. (1986). Wanted: More black teacher education students. Action for Teacher Education, 8 (1), pp 31-36.

Richardson, R.C. Jr. and Bender, L.W. (1987). Fostering minority access and achievement in higher education, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Scherr, M.A. (1987). Listening and learning from minority women teachers. Teacher Education Quarterly, 14 (2), 84-89.

Smith, A.P. and Clary, J.R. (1987). Leadership Institute for Minority Youth. North Carolina State University: unpublished manuscript.

State Higher Education Executive Officers and the Education Commission of the States. (1987). Focus on minorities synopsis of state higher education initiatives. Denver, CO.

Tanner, D.E. (1986). New directions in minority teacher education? Action in Teacher Education, 8(1), 13-17.

Teacher Education Reports, (1987). 9:24. Washington, DC: Feistritzer Publication, December 17.

Tewel, Kenneth J; Trubowitz, Sidney. (1987), The Minority Group Teacher: An Endangered Species. Urban Education; v22 n3; pp 355-365. October.

U.S. Department of Education (1983). Condition of Education, p. 176.

Wheller, Louane M. (1987), Promoting the Health of Black Americans, Black Issues in Higher Education 4:19, Special Report Part II: Health Sciences. Fairfax, VA: Cox, Mathews and Associates, Inc. December 15.

Yakima Public Schools. (n.d.). Yakima Futures Projects, Yakima, Washington: unpublished manuscript.